

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, June 6, 2008

GOVERNOR BARBOUR ORDERS STATE FLAG FLOWN AT HALF-STAFF
IN HONOR OF WWII HERO JACK LUCAS

JACKSON, Mississippi – Governor Haley Barbour today ordered the State flag lowered to half-staff on Monday in honor of the life of World War II hero Jack Lucas. Lucas, 80, the youngest U.S. Marine to win the military's highest award – the Medal of Honor – died Thursday in Hattiesburg.

“Jack Lucas’ life is an inspiration to every American and is an important story of honor, duty and devotion to country. While we honor his life and heroic service with this gesture of respect and appreciation we will also keep his family in our thoughts and prayers,” Governor Barbour said.

The State flag will fly at half-staff from sunrise to sunset on Monday, June 9, 2008, the day Lucas will be buried.

Governor Barbour’s executive order follows:

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 997

WHEREAS, on June 5, 2008, Mississippi lost one of its most valuable citizens with the passing of World War II Veteran and Medal of Honor Recipient Jacklyn “Jack” Lucas; and

WHEREAS, Jack Lucas, a United States Marine and resident of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, joined the Marines at age 14 to serve his country during World War II. When his age was discovered he was allowed to stay in the Marines but was reassigned as a truck driver in Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, Jack Lucas, a United States Marine, stowed away on a Navy ship headed for combat in the Pacific Ocean; and

WHEREAS, Jack Lucas, on 20 February 1945, did protect and shield three fellow Marines, by diving onto two grenades, one grenade exploded and Jack Lucas was left with more than 250 pieces of shrapnel in his body, six in his brain and two in his heart; and

WHEREAS, his inspiring action and valiant spirit of self-sacrifice, not only protected his comrades from certain injury or death but also enabled them to rout the Japanese patrol and continue the advance; and

WHEREAS, Jack Lucas, a United States Marine was, at the age of 17, awarded the Medal of Honor by President Truman, making him the youngest serviceman to receive the Medal of Honor in any conflict other than the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, Jack Lucas, a Marine and Soldier, has set an example for all Americans to follow and in his own words, "I would not settle for watching from the sidelines when the United States was in such desperate need of support from its citizens;" and

WHEREAS, his love for his state and his country will forever be remembered; and

WHEREAS, the prayers of this State are with the family and friends of Jack Lucas:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Haley Barbour, by the authority vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and laws of the State of Mississippi, do hereby proclaim a period of official mourning in the State of Mississippi and further do hereby order the flag of the State of Mississippi be flown at half-staff on all buildings and grounds of the State of Mississippi and all areas under its jurisdiction beginning at sunrise and ending at sunset on June 9, 2008

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Mississippi to be affixed.

DONE at the Capitol in the City of Jackson, the 6th day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and thirty-second.

HALEY BARBOUR
GOVERNOR

BY THE GOVERNOR:

SECRETARY OF STATE